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SERVICE

USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

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USED APPLIANCES

Can Give A Lot Of Use. A used appliance may be just the ticket for a recreation room, a vacation home, when the family budget is limited, or when an unexpected need arises. There is a certain risk involved when you buy used appliances. They can range from nearly new to almost junk. But a good shopper--of either a used or a new appliance--will plan and shop carefully for equipment that will fill a need, fit the available space, and be within the budget. Some practical pointers on buying used appliances have been compiled into a little booklet by a housing specialist of USDA's Extension Service. The seven-page booklet tells where to look for used appliances, suggests some questions to ask the seller, lists some things to watch for, and defines terms used in connection with used appliances--"As is," "Rebuilt," "Freight Damaged," etc. Part of the booklet gives buying tips on specific appliances such as refrigerators, ranges, freezers, washers, and dryers. Copies of "Buying A Used Appliance" (PA-1102) are available for 30 cents each from Consumer Information, Pueblo, Colorado 81009.

CONSERVING ENERGY

Saves Resources--Yours and Nature's. Energy consumption has doubled in the last 15 years; in the past 30 years more energy has been consumed than in all previous human history. If you have paid a gasoline, fuel oil or electric bill recently, you know that consumption is not the only thing about energy that has risen. A new USDA slide set makes the point that conserving energy is everyone's business and conservation begins at home. "Energy: Use It Wisely Around The Home," gives some practical tips on how to save energy and reduce costs in and around the house. Some of the tips are obvious--turn down thermostat; some are not so obvious--you may not have thought about locating the hot water heater near the area where the hottest water is needed or that a second hot water heater might improve the efficiency of your hot water system. The 69-frame slide set can be purchased for \$18.50 from Photography Division, Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. A flimstrip version is available for \$11.50 from Photo Lab, Inc., 3825 Georgia Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20011. Prices include a cassette with soundtrack and two copies of an illustrated narrative guide.



RESEARCHERS IN SHEEPS' CLOTHING

Improve On The Nature Of Wool. Science may not have removed all the scratch from wool, but scientists of USDA's Agricultural Research Service have produced wool fabrics with other highly desirable features--wools with comfortable two-way stretch and wool that is flameproof. A new chemical treatment, applied at any time after fibers are woven, gives wool and wool-blend fabrics the stretch properties that have made synthetic double-knits so popular. The process is economical and can easily be integrated into today's manufacturing techniques. Additional benefits of the stretchable wools include slightly better wrinkle recovery and more resistance to abrasions than untreated fabrics. The second research development, the flameproofing treatment, is also economical and easily applied--during the regular dyeing process. The treated fabrics, upon ignition in laboratory tests, completely extinguish themselves. The treatment, which can be applied to wool, wool-blended fabric and nylon, has little or no effect on fabric softness so clothing, blankets and carpets should be every bit as comfortable to the touch as untreated fabrics. The flameproofing treatment appears to make wools more moth resistant.

YOUTH PROJECT LOANS

Giving Credit To Young People. A high school student in Vermont operates his own trash removal business; a 12-year-old Mississippi boy is raising five head of cattle which he will fatten for market and for profit; a 15-year-old girl sells leather-craft goods through her own business establishment, a roadside stand near her Kansas home. These young people are in business for themselves thanks to the Youth Project Loan Program. The federal credit program, operated by USDA's Farmers Home Administration (FmHA), helps young people establish and operate business enterprises, giving them opportunity to learn financial responsibility--and earn a profit--through practical experience. Since its inception in September 1973, the program has made loans totaling more than \$17 million to some 5500 young people, mostly for farm related enterprises. Participants in the program must be under 21 years old, live in the open country or in towns of less than 10,000 population, and be unable to obtain financing from other sources. Only projects of modest size can be financed and the project must be a part of an organized and supervised program. Too, the business project must be planned to produce sufficient income to repay the loan. Details on the loan program may be obtained from the Farmers Home Administration county supervisor, usually located in the county seat, or from Farmers Home Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

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